



## CHRONIC JOY®

Ministering to those affected by:  
Chronic Illness, Mental Illness,  
Chronic Pain, & Disability

### SELF-CARE FOR YOUR BODY

Practicing physical self-care is showing your body simple kindness, generously giving it what it needs, and doing things that help you live well.

1. **Do something physically soothing.** Snuggle under a cozy blanket, lay down with a soft pillow, take a warm bath, soak your feet, or give yourself a hug.
2. **Sit outside.** Soak in the sun, breathe in the fresh air. Sit near an open window or look at pictures of a nature scene that seems refreshing to you. **Think of it as a one-minute vacation.**
3. **Listen to your body.** It is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Respect what it tells you by not pushing past its limits.
4. **It's OK to say "No"** to commitments and activities that are beyond your current capabilities. Remind yourself that it *is* OK to say "No."
5. **Break tasks into smaller steps.** Instead of cleaning your home all at once, do one small task each day, pacing yourself. Your body will thank you.
6. **Engage your senses.** Savor a favorite food; delight in a lovely fragrance; relish a beautiful view; enjoy the feel of soft fabric; appreciate the sounds of nature. Embrace the pleasure of God's world.
7. **Accept help.** Offer others the opportunity to serve and love in this way. When possible, utilize physical aids, such as a shower chair or grabber to make tasks easier.
8. **Exercise.** Consult your doctor about what type of physical activity is appropriate for you. It might be taking a walk or riding a bike or gentle stretching. Enjoy moving in the best way for you.

Visit [chronic-joy.org](https://chronic-joy.org) for more resources.



### SELF-CARE INCLUDES COMMUNITY

Community is rooted in love, nourished in prayer, and strengthened in courageous vulnerability as we extend and receive love, kindness, and compassion.

1. **Stay connected.** Whether it's in person or virtually, keep in touch with loved ones. Think of what they add to your life.
2. **Focus on kind acts** toward you and encouraging words spoken to you. Let yourself soak in the care and love they represent.
3. **Join an online group.** It could be something like cooking, art, photography, or crafting, anything that interests you. Enjoy connecting with others over what you have in common.
4. **Bond with a loved one.** Choose something you both like. Play a game, work on a project, share jokes, or challenge each other to trivia.
5. **Build your support system.** Try to have a mix of people in your life, including those who can relate to what you're experiencing and others with whom you can focus on other things.
6. **Confide in someone** you trust about what is troubling you. Let that person know if you want advice or simply want to be heard.
7. **Set boundaries.** Boundaries are established guidelines about suitable behavior and responsibilities. You may set boundaries regarding use of your things, personal space, thoughts and opinions, emotions, and spiritual beliefs. It's reasonable to protect yourself in this way.
8. **Communicate your needs.** Perhaps you need someone to check in with you to ask how you are genuinely doing and be able to support you whatever you have to say.
9. **Write a letter** to someone who has hurt you, pray over it, then destroy it. This is one way to try to let go of the hurt.

*Love one another deeply from the heart.*  
(1 Peter 1:22b)

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